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## Pregnancy insurance clause approved by Senate

The Maine Campus

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# Pregnancy insurance clause approved by Senate

A proposed change which adds student coverage for pregnancy to the present health insurance plan, at a cost increase of \$4.50 per year, was approved by the Student Senate, Tuesday night.

The approval, by 28-2 margin, came after a debate on the validity of increasing insurance costs for both males and females to provide coverage for a problem applying primarily to women.

Under this proposed premium, \$4.50 added to the present fee of \$25 covers the UMO student for pregnancy regardless of marital status. Previously, pregnancy coverage was extended only to those students who paid an \$85 spouse premium, as well as the student fee.

This proposal offers the benefit to both married and unmarried students of \$150 coverage for abortion and \$400 for term pregnancy. Any unmarried female student gets this coverage automatically. An unmarried male student is only benefited if the pregnant woman involved is a UMO student.

The lack of coverage for non-student women impregnated by males holding this insurance was contested by several senators representing all-male constituents.

In response to senators Rick Romanow and Ray Totaro's complaints that male students would be paying for coverage benefiting primarily females, one senator stressed the unlikelihood of "finding any insurance company that will universally cover a male for any pregnancy in which he is involved.

It was also pointed out that under the present plan, women, as well as men, pay for coverage of vasectomies. One representative commented "not too many women get vasectomies."

In the face of statistics, which show 150 pregnancies reported to the Health Center last year—with 100 per cent opting for abortion—ATO representative Bill Leonard said, "I think we can afford this kind of help for girls on campus, especially since it's really inexpensive."

Included in the approved changes was an increase of \$5 raising the spouse premium cost to \$90 and child's to \$55. This increase provides coverage for all referrals by a primary care physician to care centers other than the University's. Married students, have the option of taking out the less expensive student plan rather than the spouse premium, under the proposed change.

Student senate passage of this proposal provides that the present insurance plan may go out for bid to the insurance companies which made this informal offer.

Originally, the premium was not to go out for bid until 1976.

If the insurance companies withdraw this offer in their bids, the present insurance policy will still stand. A decision on the proposal is expected within the month.

In other Senate business, Sen. Kyle Jones introduces an idea being considered for a hitchhiking system in and around

campus. The system, in which hitchhikers wear armbands with serial numbers to indicate their status as University students needing rides, is designed to eliminate student violation of the law against "thumbing."